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OF THE STANDARDIZATION OF
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE FIFTH CONFERENCE

Report of Indonesia

Paper submitted by Indonesia**

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The production of a gazetteer of geographical names for a very large country such as Indonesia, with many ethnic languages and a long history of human settlement, is a long and complex task. It is not surprising that a completed gazetteer does not exist for the whole country at the level of detail corresponding to the names to be found on 1:50,000 scale topomaps.

With the completion of the new 1:50,000 topomapping in Kalimantan and Sulawesi a new computerized gazetteer will be produced. This gazetteer will be a model likely to be accepted as the national standard, and hence, superseding all the gazetteers and name lists so far published.

The benefits of the computerized gazetteer, inter alia, are: (a) automatic selection of names according to location, scale and type of map; (b) automatic setting of names, if interfaced with CRTronic phototype setter, thus saving time and eliminating errors caused by manual input; and (c) easy publication and updating.

A new approach has been tried in the collection of names in the field, not in conjunction with topomapping, but names collection, as detailed as possible, straight from the smallest administrative boundary units, with the aim of establishing a national geographical names database. The position of the names in the field will be done by hand-held global positioning system. This is to avoid selection of names in the field due to the scale of maps.

A national names authority has not yet been established, but the need has been felt in the Ministry of Home Affairs that such authority is required. The first coordinating meeting has been held and it is most probable that the authority will be within the sphere of the Ministry, supported by a technical committee coordinated by BAKOSURTANAL.

A geographical names research unit has then to be set up at BAKOSURTANAL to conduct research in toponymy, supported by an interdisciplinary team in ethno-linguistics and cultural matters.